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The EOHED Agenda for 2009  
Address by Secretary Daniel O'Connell  
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University of Massachusetts Lowell  
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I want to thank Chancellor Meehan for hosting us today. The University of Massachusetts at Lowell is a fitting place to speak about the economy and our agenda for state and regional revitalization. Education, innovation and civic engagement are pillars of the Governor's agenda and they are the agenda of Chancellor Meehan and UMass. Just this week, the university announced an almost \$12 million renovation of Fox Hall, its largest residence hall. This project will create 200 construction jobs in the coming months, and provide 119 new beds in time for the fall semester. In November, the university announced that the Mass Medical Device Development Center (popularly known as M2D2), a joint project

of UMass Lowell and UMass Worcester, has assisted 23 companies in its first 18 months of operation. These are just two examples of how UMass Lowell is supporting the regional economy in both the short and long term.

I want to acknowledge Lowell's excellent House Delegation – Representatives Kevin Murphy, Thomas Golden and David Nangle. We are happy to be hosted here in Lowell, led by Mayor Caulfield, the City Council and City Manager Lynch. Finally, I want to especially recognize Senator Panagiotakos for his leadership. He has been a key ally and source of advice on all of the major housing and economic development issues of this administration. I look forward to working with you in this critical time and value your past counsel.

A year ago today, few – if any – voices predicted as deep a recession as the United States and the world are certain to face in the coming months. The monthly employment, consumer and business confidence numbers are all sobering, as are the monthly retail sales and quarterly earnings reports of our nation's largest and most respected companies. State and local resources to meet our most basic needs and urgent priorities are stretched at a time in which they are needed more than ever.

The people of Massachusetts are concerned and, as we all do in times of crisis, they are looking for reassurance that we can and will weather these troubles. There is, of course, hope in the form of a new Congress and new Administration in Washington, D.C. The Patrick-Murray Administration is working closely with our outstanding Congressional delegation and the incoming Obama Administration to craft a recovery package that would enable us to meet some of the immediate needs of our residents and make investments that position Massachusetts to be stronger and more prosperous in the future. We have organized aggressively to ensure that if and when a bill passes, we will be well-positioned to obtain the state's fair share of the funds and put them immediately to work for the people of Massachusetts. Many people in this room today have been asked for their advice or to provide critical information for this effort. We thank you for your input.

However hopeful we are that federal assistance will be forthcoming, we have no intention of waiting to establish our agenda or respond to the needs of the people of Massachusetts. As put more eloquently by Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray, we must find new ways and new means of meeting the basic needs of our fellow residents. And we must respond together. The Patrick-Murray Administration has, from the beginning, been dedicated to partnership, reform and results.

There is no greater case for reform or action than the foreclosure crisis affecting households – renters and homeowners – and communities statewide. Our response to the foreclosure crisis continues to be of the highest priority to our secretariat, and to the Governor. We are working everyday with our nonprofit partners to offer counseling to families at risk for foreclosure so that they can stay in their homes when possible. In addition, we are working closely with Senator Tucker and other leaders in the legislature on new legislation that will provide more protections for tenants in foreclosed properties and make mortgage fraud a criminal offense. And, through the leadership of Undersecretary Brooks and her hard working staff, we have been able to secure \$43.4m in federal funds. Yesterday, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development announced it had approved our plans for these funds. This means we can continue and expand our efforts to work with communities across the state to reclaim and rehabilitate vacant and foreclosed properties. This funding would not have been possible without the incredible efforts of our congressional delegation - including Congresswoman Tsongas. Through this program, and our other efforts, we will continue to lead the country in working to stabilize communities hard hit by foreclosures.

In the past two years, the Legislature, led notably by Senator Panagiotakos, and Representatives Murphy, Golden and Nangle, have passed significant reforms and made major investments that provide the basis on which we – irrespective of federal funds – may act. The Broadband Act, housing education and transportation bond authorizations, Growth District Initiative funding authored by Senator Panagiotakos, Life Sciences Act, Green Jobs and Green Communities Acts all establish the means to proceed aggressively with a strategy to rebuild the Massachusetts economy.

The Patrick-Murray agenda for housing and economic development is a call to action. Working with many of you, we have developed a Framework for Action designed to expand the Massachusetts economy, revitalize communities, expand housing choices and provide the basis for shared prosperity and opportunity throughout the Commonwealth. It is a guide to the principles and priorities through which we will partner with you to grow our economy.

Today, Massachusetts is a leading exporter in many industries: life sciences, information technology, clean energy, defense technologies, higher education, financial services and the creative economy. Massachusetts is home to one of the

highest median household incomes in the United States and boasts some of the best public schools in the nation.

Massachusetts is a 21st Century success story. The evidence of our state's competitive strength grows every week. Recent studies by nationally renowned institutes have ranked Massachusetts as a leading center of innovation, entrepreneurship and home to one of the most talented populations in the world. All of this is true, but it is also true that the benefits of our robust export economy are not evenly shared across regions of the state or even within them. Income inequality is a national problem; creating the conditions that can lead to broader and more widely shared prosperity in Massachusetts is our responsibility.

The Patrick-Murray Administration's goal is to build on the existing strength of our export-oriented industries while we broaden the number of communities and people who can participate in the job growth that comes with that expansion. The success of Massachusetts' Life Sciences, Clean Energy, Information Technology and Creative Economy Initiatives is central to our ability to expand opportunity in the state. We will continue to work, as we have, with the state's quasi-public agencies, such as MassDevelopment, the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, the

Massachusetts Technology Transfer Center, and institutions like the University of Massachusetts to build upon regional assets and business strengths to extend employment in these industries to every corner of the state.

The method to expand the footprint of our leading industries in Massachusetts is collaboration. The private sector creates jobs from a foundation of research and development – often conducted at our excellent universities and teaching hospitals – and product and process development financed by local, national and global investors. Massachusetts wins when businesses, academia and government come together.

The Patrick-Murray Administration has and will continue to work with the state's pre-eminent business, academic and scientific experts to develop programs and investments that are competitively-awarded, based on best practices and support a sustainable climate for innovation. And, working together, we will also continue to strategically market our state's regions, products and talent to the nation and the world. In 2008, as the economy declined, global demand for Massachusetts products kept our state's economy afloat. Global trade is central to our recovery and future prosperity.

Private investment and job growth are affected by many factors, and we know that we cannot expand opportunity by wishing it so. The experience of MassDevelopment at Devens shows how critical it is for state and local leadership to focus on the fundamentals and plan for success. Our communities need places for housing and job growth, efficient and modern infrastructure, and good connectivity – via road, rail and broadband – to employment opportunities and information. Our education and workforce training programs must be well-matched to local labor markets and offer skills that build careers. Governor Patrick, when he created the Development Cabinet, emphasized the need to bring all of the state’s development resources to bear to create sustainable economic growth. The Framework for Action is a concrete expression of the state’s emphasis on good planning and collaboration.

The Growth District Initiative launched by Governor Patrick last April, as well as critical reforms to Chapter 40B implemented by the Department of Housing and Community Development, are designed to spur housing and job creation in cities and towns that have done the hard work to plan for growth. In Massachusetts, that task is made much harder by an outdated state zoning act that does not offer the right mix of tools and incentives to allow municipalities and regions to truly control their destinies. This week, Senator Chandler and



Representative Honan filed a Zoning Reform Bill, developed after months of effort by a broadly representative task force, which will finally offer communities an alternative. Zoning Reform is absolutely critical to improving the prospect of job growth and housing development in a manner that preserves our historic heritage and natural resources.

Massachusetts has a long and cherished history of celebrating the unique qualities of its 351 cities and towns. The Patrick-Murray Administration shares that sentiment but also recognizes that today, regions are the scale in which housing, labor and job markets exist. For Massachusetts' many regions to grow and prosper in a manner that maintains and celebrates local qualities, municipalities must become actively invested in the success of one another. What does that mean? The suburbs cannot succeed without robust, prosperous cities. The cities are dependent upon the innovation and entrepreneurialism often found in suburban corporate campuses and universities. And the sustainability – fiscal and environmental – of both cities and suburbs demands a fresh look at the regionalization of facilities and services.

The Framework for Action sets out a series of reforms and targeted investments that will allow the state and its partners at the local level and in the

private sector to focus their dollars in ways that benefit regions in terms of private investment, housing opportunities, innovation and job growth. In the coming weeks, we will unveil legislation and initiatives that, like the Zoning Reform Bill, will set out concrete reforms to realize this vision. The Development Cabinet, under the leadership of Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray, has already adopted a set of investment principles that reflect the Framework for Action.

The next and most critical step is to partner with all of you to fully unlock and realize the potential of our people, businesses and communities. The time could not be more critical or the task more urgent. We are organized, focused and ready to work with you to secure our state's economic future – and continue to assure that Massachusetts is a place where people with ideas and initiative want to be.